

HOUSE BILL 399

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Dairy Herd Hoof Health Specialist

The milk industry in Montana is unique in that it is comprised of a very few dairy herds which can and does supply all the high quality milk needed by its residents. To guarantee the high quality, safety and freshness of the milk Montana long ago instituted the Twelve Day Rule. This rule is a simple straight forward method by which consumers can be sure their milk is fresh.

Periodically parties have attempted to circumvent and negate the rule in order to be able to truck milk into the state. This out of state milk cannot meet the quality standards of Montana. This is the heart of the issue. Changing or removing the twelve day rule will permit a flood of out of state milk to enter Montana which will almost certainly destroy our dairy industry.

My position regarding the rule was made clear in previous testimony presented at the committee meeting last year. I respectfully refer you to those letters for this hearing.

As a proud independent Montana businessman I am grieved by those who would jeopardize an entire industry for the sake of questionable motives. Surely after so many attempts to remove the Twelve Day Rule it is time to put this issue to rest. The State of Montana and the people of Montana have made it completely clear that they do not wish to change the regulation. Far too much time and money has been squandered combating that tiny minority who would be the only ones to benefit from a change.

Please protect our Montana milk industry, businesses such as mine and the families that work so very hard to produce a product that we can all be proud of. Please Retain the Twelve Day Rule

Ronald Kummerfeldt